



PS3 CASE BRIEF

BEST PRACTICES LEARNED

Designing and managing a multi-sector project.

If you have the people, the resources, and the means to deliver services, then you have the right elements to improve the quality of service delivery. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Government of Tanzania (GoT) used this principle to guide their approach for designing the Public Sector Systems Strengthening (PS3) project by examining how resources are mobilized and applied into planning and budgeting for public services. The system approach for designing PS3, combined with consistent stakeholder engagement and commitment, has made this multi-sector project successful in integrating people and systems to improve the quality of public services delivered.

Through PS3, USAID is partnering with the GOT to help strengthen the systems that deliver important services to Tanzanians, paving the way for Tanzania to rely less on foreign donor assistance and more on the very systems Tanzanians are building for themselves.

Tanzania now benefits from a new financial management system bolstered by increased data use and data-driven decision making that enables health facilities to plan for and more quickly address the health needs of the communities who rely on them, versus relying on unpredictable monetary transfers from local governments. The new system has contributed to an increase in revenue across all levels of the health system, a shift in funding to primary health care across the country and improved service delivery. It also enables health facilities to make contingency plans for emergencies or oncoming pressures on the health system.

BEST PRACTICE: INTEGRATED DESIGN

PS3 was designed to address how resources are mobilized and applied into planning and budgeting for health, education and other public services in Tanzania. USAID examined the people, financial resources and existing systems that come together to deliver public services such as education and health to Tanzanians.

Today, health facilities and schools have more autonomy and accountability for how they managed their day-to-day operations. The Direct Facility Financing (DFF), facilitated by PS3, allows health and education facilities to plan, budget, procure, account and manage the mix of supplies to deliver public services. Complementing the DFF are two interoperable information technology systems, PlanRep and the Facility Financial Accounting and Reporting System (FFARS), that enable facilities to develop financial plans, budgets and improve accounting and reporting. Together, DFF, PlanRep and FFARS have increased the autonomy of facilities and improved their accountability for the quality of public services.

PS3 evolved with sustainability and Tanzanian autonomy in mind. The IT systems that resulted from the project, such as GoTHOMIS, FFARS and others, were designed by Tanzanian engineers and are wholly owned and operated by the Government of Tanzania. In addition, the government fully adopted the systems across the country to prevent geographical imbalances. From the design of the project to its implementation, the government was involved and invested.

BEST PRACTICE: CAREFUL STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

Multi-sector projects naturally have many different stakeholders because of the number of different institutions they impact. USAID invested time in identifying and engaging with as many stakeholders as possible to understand their role in PS3's success. From external donors in the health and education sectors around the country to USAID mission health, economic growth, education, democracy, human rights and governance offices, stakeholders became partners and important advocates for the project.

The Tanzanian government was invested in the project's success from the start, investing government resources to be part of the design and planning of PS3. A critical success factor, however, was identifying the right office within the government to engage for the project. USAID found the answer in the President's Office of Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG). PORALG is responsible for the delivery of public services and works across multiple sectors such as education and health, making it the ideal partner to help improve public service delivery. This type of office within the government structure may be unique to Tanzania so for USAID projects in other countries, identifying the host government entity with the appropriate mandate and interest in the success and sustainability of a multi-sector project is essential.

Other foreign government donors are also important advocates. Tanzania's Health Basket Fund receives direct fiscal support from Canada, Norway, Ireland, and other foreign government donors. These other donors became strong advocates for PS3 as they saw the project identify bottlenecks in the health system and enable their funding to more directly benefit health facilities. USAID continues to engage with other donors who have traditionally invested in Tanzania, and has offered opportunities to co-fund the follow-on project, PS3 Plus.

BEST PRACTICE: CONSISTENT STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The health office in the USAID mission invested significant time and effort to ensure all funding sectors' interests were represented and that engagement was not limited to funding, but also included commitment and interest in the project's success. Leadership communications were critical for getting the commitment from other offices in the mission. The mission director to Tanzania encouraged cross-funding for the project and advocated for the potential multi-sector impact the project possessed. The Tanzania mission has an integrated Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and PS3 supports several of the mission's development objectives. Frequent communication and engagement between the mission's health office and other technical offices helped sustain interest and ensure other offices' investments were represented in the design and throughout implementation of the project. While this approach was time intensive for the health office, it paid off in terms of securing broad commitment and interest from the mission.

USAID counterparts to health in the mission in Tanzania were also essential stakeholders. The intent of PS3 was to include different funding sources to get buy-in from multiple sectors. Frequent communication and engagement at key points in the project's design and implementation kept USAID counterparts involved in decision points and helped them understand how the project concerned them directly and its impacts to their sector.

BEST PRACTICE: SYSTEM APPROACH FOR RESILIENCE

PS3 was designed with a whole-of-system approach that reinforces the country's capacity to maintain essential health services before, during and after health emergencies and stressors. The systems that now enable the government to send funds directly to health facilities are helping these facilities respond to the sudden pressure of COVID-19. Health districts can respond to health needs within their communities and can include contingency plans which the government can approve within a shorter time. In addition, the government now has greater visibility into how those funds are being allocated in different geographies which is important for understanding social interaction during the pandemic. A year from now, when the government is in its planning phase again, health districts and their communities can look back at the planning and include new contingency plans for potential emergencies.

THE NEXT STEP IN THE JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE

At the close of PS3 and on the eve of PS3+, USAID and the GOT are seeing an uptake in the use of health information systems, however more training is needed to encourage greater use of the new systems and increase understanding of how to use data. More data-driven decision making also means greater accountability for the quality of healthcare provided and USAID and the GOT anticipate greater use of the health system by the population as a result. A key next step for the country is to assess the effects of resource constraints and health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. USAID stands ready to partner with Tanzania and is proud to have achieved together the system-wide changes that advance the country on its journey to self-reliance.